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time intended by the composer, "Now or Never" will prove a most effective piece.

*A Collection of French Romances, Italian Ariettes, and English Ballads.* Composed by Rosario Aspa.

THESE little vocal pieces, although unequal in merit, are graceful, and characterized by a musicianlike feeling which should recommend them to all singers in search of novelty. From the set of twelve, we select a few for special mention. No. 3, "Barcarolle" has a quaint and exquisite melody, which is certain to charm all hearers. The alternation between major and minor is exceedingly effective; and the southern *dolce far niente* character of the Barcarolle is admirably preserved. So thoroughly Italian is the melody that we are almost sorry to find it composed to French words. Amongst the other French songs we are inclined to place Nos. 2, 6, and 8 foremost; the last named, especially, having a most attractive subject, accompanied unobtrusively, and in consonance with the simple character of the melody. Nos. 1 and 7, written to Italian words, are unpretending specimens of pure vocal writing, No. 7, "Va piu non dirmi infida," in which the accompaniment runs with the voice throughout, being peculiarly suitable for a teaching song. Nos. 5 and 10 are really good English songs. No. 5, "Twas but a gentle sigh," (dedicated to Miss Cecilia Westbrook), being composed in the genuine ballad style, and the music well expressing the words, which by the way, are written by the composer himself.

*He went to the Forest. Song.* Composed by Arthur O'Leary.

THIS song, written for a low contralto voice, expresses with much feeling the suggestive words translated from the Swedish of Björnson. There is much poetical thought both in the melody and accompaniment of this composition; and a sympathetic vocalist may confidently rely upon its success with an audience.

LAMBORN COCK, ADDISON AND CO.

*Four Romances for Pianoforte and Violin.* By Walter Macfarren.

THESE four elegantly written Romances are well worthy the attention of violin players who are desirous of uniting their talents with those of a good pianist; for although not very difficult for either instrument, the passages are equally distributed, and the pieces cannot fail to please even a mixed audience. No. 3, a Canzonet, and No. 4, Idyll, are especially remarkable for melodiousness and delicacy of treatment; the last-named, in A minor, being in our opinion the best of the set. They are appropriately dedicated to M. Sainton, who performed them, with Mr. Macfarren, at one of the composer's concerts last season.

*A Glimpse of Blue Sky. Song.* The words by Frederick Enoch. The music by Henry Smart.

LIKE all this composer's vocal music, the melody and accompaniment of this song move so amicably together that it will be certain to prove effective; and although perhaps scarcely so striking as some of Mr. Smart's compositions which have lately come before us, it is far better than the majority of songs daily thrown into the market.

*Organ Voluntary, adapted from his Motett, "De profundis."*

By J. McMURDIE. Mus. Bac. Oxon.

IT is somewhat difficult to determine what the effect of this transcription would be in its original shape. As an organ voluntary, it is not altogether interesting. The introduction has many points which are absolutely unintelligible in the absence of words, as well as one or two bars in which the harmonies are, what is termed, a "little hard"; for example, bars 15 and 25 on page 1. The free fugue which follows displays some knowledge of the art of writing for voices, but not very much of the art of fugue writing. However, the whole transcription is exceedingly easy—a fact which, in the minds of many, covers a multitude of defects.

HUTCHINGS AND ROMER.

*Un Fior Campestre. Morceau de Salon, pour Piano.* Par Arthur O'Leary.

An effective pianoforte piece, unpretentious in design;

but, like all artistic trifles, demanding an artist to interpret it. The second subject will scarcely preserve its placid character, at page 4, under the fingers of a mere passage player.

MACMILLAN AND CO.

*A Hymnal, chiefly from the "Book of Praise."* By Sir ROUNDELL PALMER. Set to music, selected, harmonised, and composed by JOHN HULLAH.

A BOOK of hymn tunes is, in a general way, a book of hymn tunes, and nothing else; by which we desire to be understood as meaning that one tune book somewhat resembles another, and the Book of Praise Hymnal is no exception to the general rule, at least, in its general form. In some minor particulars, it is true, Mr. Hullah's book will be found to differ from the others, whose name is legion; as, for example, in the arrangement of the hymns, "according to the subjects of the Creed," and "The Lord's Prayer," for which we suppose we are indebted to Sir Roundell Palmer, if we can feel any amount of gratitude for that which could never have been desired, and when obtained, is of no possible use. An indiscriminate mixture of psalms and hymns is another novelty, somewhat necessitated by the before-mentioned general arrangement which, we suppose, may also be attributed to the compiler; but the most startling of all novelties in the book, is the perfectly original use which Mr. Hullah has put the sign known to all musical minds as a Pause. "It is to indicate the ends of the lines," he tells us in the Preface. "It is a substitute for the ordinary double bar, and, as a pause, it should be entirely disregarded!" Now, to any one who has experienced the trouble and difficulty of making a body of singers recognise and attend to the signs ordinarily used in musical notation, it appears almost monstrous to set up a sign, and then give careful orders that it should be "entirely disregarded." We are tempted to ask if there be any necessity for indicating the ends of the lines at all? We ourselves have been, for some years, in the habit of using hymn tunes without any such indications as double bars or pauses in the middle; and we must confess we have never experienced the want of them. Mr. Hullah will, we are sure, forgive us for speaking plainly on this point, as it is really a serious blot upon a book which has otherwise a good deal to recommend it. He has, on the other hand, wisely thrown aside the old style of notation, and given us crotchets and quavers, as more nearly suggesting to the modern mind the actual duration of each note. The Hymnal contains 159 tunes and 320 hymns; a considerable number of the former being of German origin, and a large proportion of English manufacture, the production of the last two centuries. A select few have been specially written by Mr. Hullah and other living composers, including Mr. E. J. Hopkins, Dr. Monk, Dr. Steggall, Mr. J. Barnby, and Mr. A. S. Sullivan.

J. PITMAN.

"Behold, I bring you glad tidings." "Why seek ye the living among the dead." "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Anthems for Four Voices. Composed by JAMES VAUGHAN.

"Dies Irae!" by the same Composer.

WE cannot look upon these pieces as adding anything new or good to the repertoire of church music. It is true they are simple in form, and would, no doubt, prove easy of execution. But surely this is not all we are to expect of new music, especially music intended for use in the sanctuary. Sometimes a phrase occurs which is almost pretty, but it is invariably spoilt, either by the phrase following, or by the clumsy manner in which the two are joined. If Mr. Vaughan would take our advice—which is offered in all kindness—he would place himself under a good master of harmony and counterpoint, with a view of learning the art of writing two consecutive phrases properly; an art of which, truth compels us to say, he appears to be at present, completely ignorant.